

Album loses its quality in transatlantic passage

In 1982, XTC released a double album in the United Kingdom called *English Settlement*. About half of that album was on one vinyl in the U.S. When Prince's 1999 was released in the United Kingdom, it was a single album.

This tradition of condensing transatlantic albums continues with the new album by Bill Nelson. *On A Blue Wing* is a single album containing the "best" songs taken from the double album released in Britain.

This isn't the first time something like this has happened to the former leader of Be Bop Deluxe. A few years ago his American label Portrait released an album called *Vistamix* that contained songs from several albums released in the U.K. Is this a problem? As long as the best songs are taken from a double album, won't it be a stronger record? In general, maybe. With Nelson, definitely not. Much of Nelson's work is bridges and snippets that don't really stand up by themselves but add a lot to an album.

So, what is *On A Blue Wing* like? It's a good record. Nelson's music influenced by Eastern sounds and melodies and by his early art-rock meanderings. At least this half of the finished product is tamer than Nelson's music has been in a while; but it is still compelling music. It's a shame Portrait doesn't have the

Wynston Smythe Albums

guts to release all of it.

Match Game is the second album from Don Dixon's little sister Marti Jones. Jones was once in a nice power pop band called Color Me Gone. Her first solo album sounded similar to Color Me Gone with the noticeable help of Dixon. Again, on *Match Game*, she is joined by Dixon (plus other notables), and again, she writes none of the album's songs (although she does co-write with Dixon); but there the similarities stop.

Match Game has very little energy; most of the songs are nice, subdued melodies designed to highlight her pleasant, if unremarkable, voice. Her choice of songs is again quite good with the exception of David Bowie's "Soul Love," which she sounds silly trying to sing. It's a good record, just disappointing.

On the new album from Talking Heads are songs David Byrne wrote for his film *True Stories*. It is not a soundtrack; the songs are performed by others in the film. From offbeat brainy pop to Eno-land to Talking Heads funk back to pop, Talking Heads keeps critics from writing the same things about the band. *True*

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PlayMakers' trains students who look forward to stardom

By KATIE WHITE
Staff Writer

Which of us has known his brother? Which of us has looked into his father's heart? Which of us has not remained prison-pent? Which of us is not forever a stranger and alone?

O waste of loss, in the hotmazes, lost, among bright stars on this most weary unbright cinder, lost! Remembering speechlessly we seek the great forgotten language, the lost lane-end into heaven, a stone, a leaf, an unfound door. Where? When?

O lost, and by the wind grieved, ghost, come back again. — Thomas Wolfe

At times, Chapel Hill seems to be just a sea of lost and forgotten faces zig-zagging across the quad or lines of undefined bodies winding through buildings and halls. Will any of the anonymous find the forgotten language or the unfound door?

It has been said that to look at a Harvard graduating class is to see those people who will be controlling the country in 30 years. At UNC, looking at the PlayMakers' Repertory Company could be to catch a glimpse of those who may be entertaining that class of people for the next 30 years or more.

UNC was one of the first American universities to actively explore the idea of professional theater as a major part of theater education. PlayMakers, opened by Arthur Houseman and Tom Haas in 1976, combines performance and training by bringing students and professional actors together on stage. Sponsored by the Department of Dramatic Art, it is the only full-season, non-profit professional theater in North Carolina.

The company begins its 1986-1987 season on September 24 with the

opening of "Look Homeward Angel," written by Thomas Wolfe, a UNC alumnus.

The theater itself has been a part of Chapel Hill's cultural community since 1918 when Frederick Henry Koch created what he called "American folk drama." He originally started the organization to generate new American plays, and with this "playmaking" he captured the attention of hopeful playwrights, Thomas Wolfe being one of the first and most famous. These "folk plays" were about the native experiences of these writers: their customs, superstitions, legends and myths.

This program expanded to "town and gown" performances in which the community and the students performed together in order to bring the manuscripts to life. From this, Koch got the idea of generating good actors for the corps, and Carolina PlayMakers was formed. Koch began touring the troupe nationwide and built a reputation for good acting because of the true-to-life dramas. In 1925, the state donated the Smith Building to the PlayMakers, and it became the first state-owned playhouse in the United States.

When Koch died in 1944, Samuel Seldon took over and continued to expand the program. Their repertoire came to include American classics and Shakespeare, which was often performed in Forest Theater. Seldon formalized the program into a strong structure that supported the development of actors, among them Andy Griffith, Louis Fletcher, James Pritchett and George Grizzard.

The play writing has continued. Dick Beene, the current playwright-in-residence, recently won a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. PlayMakers itself has grown into a large department with specialized majors ranging from technical design to costumeing.

"A repertory company must be an ensemble that can play together in many styles, finding the life in plays from every period," David Hammond, artistic director and head of the Conservatory Training Program at PlayMakers, said. "They must bring to each text the skills and sensibility necessary to release the essential truth of the plot, on its own terms and in its own form, for a modern audience."

Hammond, a graduate of Harvard and the Carnegie-Mellon University Drama School, came to UNC two years ago. He has served on the faculties of the Yale School of Drama, Julliard School and the

American Conservatory Theater and has taught special courses in schools and festivals from coast to coast.

"An essential function of our work at PlayMakers must be the living maintenance of our theatrical heritage through the production of major European and American classics, plays requiring fresh confrontation and interpretation by each generation of actors and theater-goers," Hammond said. "Another function must be that of retrieval — the rediscovery and rejuvenation of major works that have slipped into neglect despite their importance in theater history and possible significance today, works ripe for reassessment that can change our understanding of our past and of ourselves."

"Equally essential is the presentation of the best contemporary theater and a wholehearted commitment to the development of new works, because theater that is healthy must use the knowledge of the past in the present to generate the future."

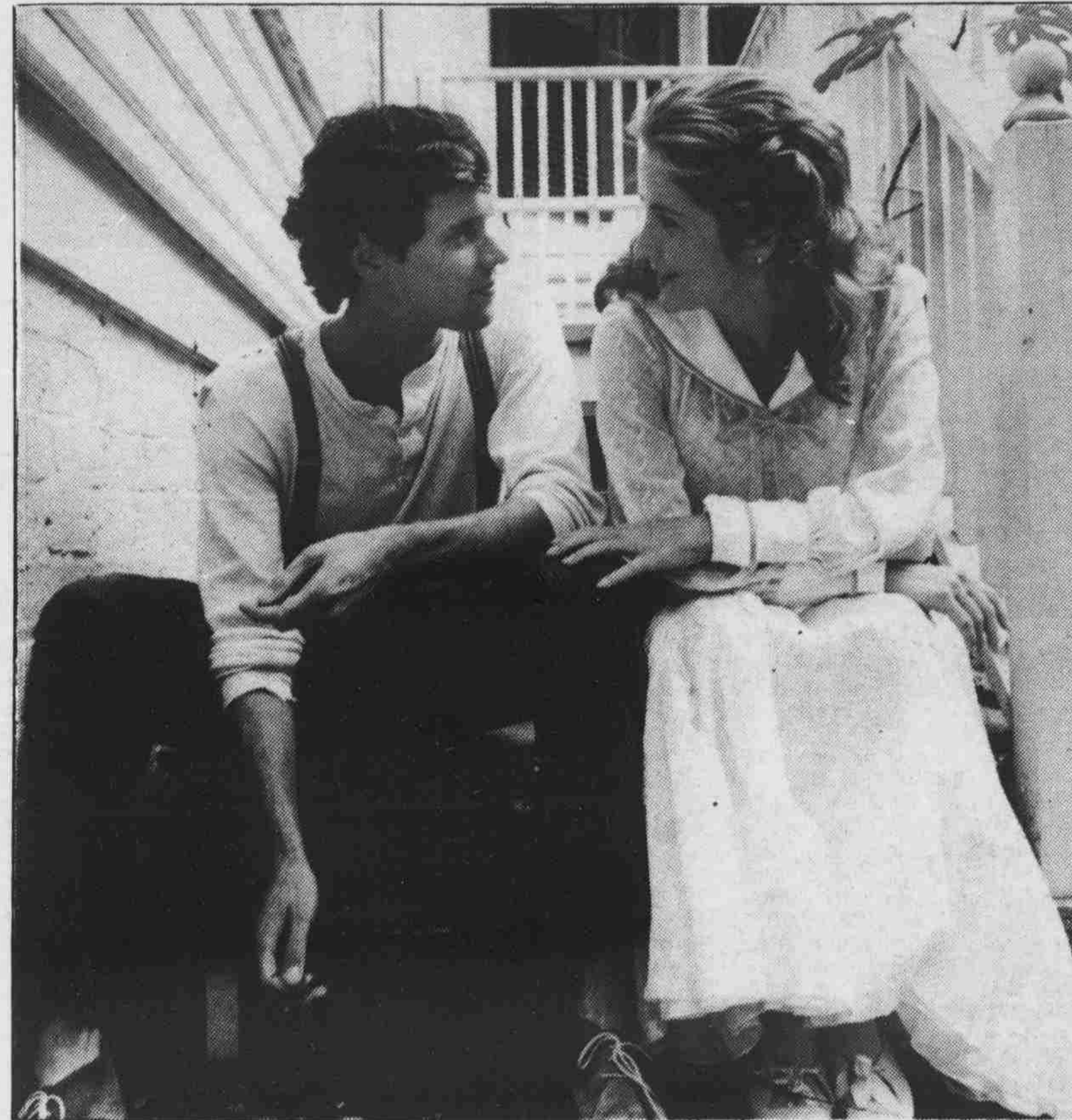
Hammond has worked the organization up to what he calls the second best graduate program in the nation. "We teach . . . (the students). We make sure that they are thoroughly trained. It's important that we take only what we can honestly service," he said. "One thing that we can promise them when they graduate is employment."

Since Hammond has arrived, applications for the program have tripled, yet only 10 or 11 students are chosen each year to participate.

"We must remain committed to the nurturing of our young artists both in our training programs and in our professional company, so that the work we are doing does not stop here but will continue to grow, contributing to the future life of the American stage," Hammond said.

"The company is almost a dying thing in this country, and it shouldn't be," Melissa Proctor, one of the 21 graduate students in PlayMakers, said. "It should be something that is promoted to grow. So much of it is in the commercial world. The real foundation of theater is a company structure. It's wonderful to still see it being nurtured and preserved in a very healthy and good environment such as this."

Behind this commitment to theater lies a grueling schedule of classes, rehearsals and performances that go from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., almost non-stop. During the season, the actors perform one play and study another, shifting in and out of characters, often spending hours being someone



UNC Photo Lab

Students in the PlayMakers' Repertory Company rehearse Thomas Wolfe's 'Look Homeward, Angel'

they are not.

"You've got to have a pretty sound personality," David Whalen, a second-year student, said. "If you're a nut, you'll never make it."

Both actors said they chose Carolina for the training. Students work together closely during the three-year program, receiving technical training and producing plays in a spirit of growth and unity. The course of study is divided up into a curriculum overview for each distinctive stage of the training. In the first year, called "foundations," the student spends 15 hours a week in acting classes, four hours in speech and voice, six hours in movement, three hours in scene study, and three in dance, rehearsal and performances. They also take special classes in voice, movement and acting. It is during the second and third years that students begin to participate more actively in performances, as well as pursue

courses of study, called "style and variations" and "synthesis" respectively.

The goal of such an intensive program is to help the actor develop every essence of his or her acting ability. The movement class helps to develop a strong body capable of variety in expression. In these classes, the actor explores the movement space on stage. The head of this department is Craig Turner, a movement veteran who has been an actor and mime and who has taught at universities and colleges in Washington, Ohio, California, Colorado and Massachusetts. He has also published works on mime, juggling and movement theory.

The voice and speech classes develop flexibility, clarity, range and power. The actor explores the network between voice, body, emotions and the mind and learns to enhance it. The department is headed by Carol

Pendergast, who has had training positions at the Guthrie Theater and

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